

## WHY IS PEACE IMPOSSIBLE?—A GENERAL SURVEY

Neither Side Is Beaten and Both Sides  
Have Grounds to Hope That Real  
Victory Is Still Possible—Agree-  
ment No Nearer Than It  
Was Two Years Ago

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We have had in the past fortnight a very general discussion of peace, nowhere more marked than in America. In Berlin the German Chancellor, speaking with the German success in full view, as he spoke with the conquest of Serbia in sight just a year ago, declared that Germany was ready for peace with suitable guarantees, but what those guarantees might be remains a matter of conjecture, of conjecture not helped by the very wide divergence of German views revealed in the German press.

## The Allies' Resolution

As far as the Allied nations are concerned, we know certain things. We know that our own government has the best of information to lead it to believe that France and Great Britain would regard as an unfriendly act any proffer of mediatory services now. We know that the press, the public men, the mass of the people of France and of Great Britain are resolved to go forward, "to carry on," as the British phrase is, and we know that a recent change in ministry in Russia has been recognized all over the world as a triumph of those liberal and national forces in the Duma which are determined to go on with the war.

As to Germany and her allies, largely through German arms and wholly through German generalship they have just won a considerable victory in Rumania, a victory which must dissipate any pessimism of the summer and renew confidence in ultimate victory. Weariness of the war—such we hear of vaguely—has not, on any reliable testimony available, reached a point where the German people are ready or willing to submit to terms dictated by their foes; nor do the German people conceive that such an outcome of the war is possible.

## Peace No Nearer

Actually, then, we are no nearer an agreement between the contending forces than we were one or two years ago. After two years of unprecedented waste and suffering neither of the great alliances has won anything that approaches a decisive victory. Save for the tiny corner of the Continental battlefield which is Rumania, a condition of deadlock exists everywhere, and neither alliance shows even the preliminary signs of exhaustion.

Peace could only come if one side were conquered, if the approach of exhaustion exercised a decisive influence upon one contestant (that is, one alliance); finally, if both alliances were convinced that a clear victory was impossible and that no reward commensurate with the cost of continued conflict was attainable. To put it another way, there is no Sedan, there has been no such development in any of the great powers as led Austria to yield to Frederick the Great in the first Silesian War, and there is yet no such general condition as obtained in the closing years of the war of the Spanish Succession.

In a word, all the great nations that are fighting are still in the mood of July, 1914: they are prepared to fight rather than to surrender any of the essential points for which they were prepared twenty-eight months ago to draw the sword. We shall see, as we proceed in this study, that the issue remains the same: all the new questions that have arisen since the war opened have not obscured the original question; the peace of the world still remains locked up in the fate and independence of Serbia, and Germany and Russia, the great rivals in the East, are in nowise prepared to quit the field.

## Both Sides Still Hope for Victory

Peace is impossible because no one is beaten, because neither alliance is satisfied that it cannot win and because each alliance can find in past and present conditions sufficient evidence to confirm its belief that real victory is possible and peace on present conditions a mere guarantee of subsequent hostilities.

And on what basis could peace be made now? Would Germany and her allies consent to a return to the status quo ante, to the condition of July, 1914? Would Germany and her allies consent to evacuate Belgium, Northern France, Poland, Lithuania, Serbia? Would they consent to the restoration of Belgium and Serbia; would they accept the old frontiers and the old perils without any return for their gigantic sacrifices? This is unthinkable.

Conversely, would the French, the Brit-

ish and the Russians consent to peace on the basis of two years ago? Would France put aside forever the dream of the "Lost Provinces"? Would Britain agree to return the colonies she has conquered? Would Italy give over the hopes of Trieste and the Trentino? Would Russia surrender her best chance to get Constantinople, a chance supported by Britain and France? This, too, is inconceivable. No one can know French or British sentiment at this hour who believes that such an accommodation is to-day conceivable.

The Germans, as all their public and official statements show, believe that they have won the war. To support this view they point to the long list of their victories and to the vast extent of the territory they have occupied. They assert that the last summer has proved that their Western line cannot be pierced, while their Rumanian victory has demonstrated that they still have sufficient man power to meet new foes and win new victories. They seem honestly to believe that this fact is recognized by their opponents, but that the statesmen of the opposing countries wickedly compel their peoples to go forward.

## French and British Belief

But the French and the British reason quite differently. They believe that even the limited successes of this summer demonstrate that the German armies in the West can be beaten. They reason that they are already superior in numbers, guns and munitionment; they point to the lessons of the wars of Louis XIV and of Napoleon. Germany and her allies have never won the victories of Napoleon; they have never approached his domination of the Continent. They have never done what he did; that is, temporarily put out one opponent, as Napoleon put out Austria at Austerlitz, Prussia at Jena and Russia at Friedland.

The Allies count on numbers, wealth, superior resources and the control of the sea. They point to the records of the past in the great coalition wars, and they are able to say that these coalitions ultimately wore down nations placed as Germany is placed to-day, after suffering initial defeats and disasters far surpassing those that they have suffered or are likely now to suffer.

## The Effect of Passions Unchained

There is one more force that must be reckoned with; it is the force of passion. The invasion of Belgium, the atrocities and the crimes, the bombardment of Rheims and the burning of Louvain, the submarine campaign and the Zeppelin raids have roused in Britain and in France an emotion that might easily drive both peoples to continue a war after the hope of victory had departed, either in blind anger or in the despairing conviction that

permanent peace would be impossible with the authors of these acts.

Americans must understand this emotion to understand the war and the conditions of peace. It is equally true that Russian ravages in East Prussia two years ago have stirred German passion; it is true that the mass of the German people look upon the British blockade with the same wrath that Britons regard the Zeppelin and submarine episodes. We may make our own choice between the two cases, but what it is essential to recognize once for all is that the question of peace or war in Europe to-day is not a question of provinces or colonies; before all else it is a question of the passions the war has unchained.

We may conclude that both sides have in their own minds conditions on which they would make peace. But before we turn to examine them it is worth while to examine for a moment that interesting list of conditions which have already been eliminated from the reckoning. For it is true that two years and a half of war, and we are approaching this mark, have removed from the minds of the combatants certain expectations held at the outset. There has been an end of some illusions; this is plain.

## No Liberalization of Germany from Without

In the first place, it may be doubted if there remains in London or Paris to-day any considerable remnant of that programme for the rescue of the German people from their rulers and the deliverance of the small German states from Prussia. Two years ago this was a familiar faith. As the soldiers of the Allied sovereigns marched against Republican France to restore the Bourbons, Britain and France and Russia, with some degree of difference of conviction, set out to free Germany from the Hohenzollerns and undo the work of Bismarck.

This notion has perished. Now it is perceived that the German people, like the French a century and a quarter ago, must decide their own fate, their own internal boundaries and all the questions that belong to a great people to decide. Britons and Frenchmen may dream of a liberalization of Germany to come when the war is over, and to come from within, but they can no longer hope for any change made by their hands which could survive their withdrawal. Two years of war have demonstrated the unity of Germany; they have eliminated the possibil-

ity of a remodelling of Germany from without.

As to Austria the case is different, yet who shall say now that it is as easy to believe that the dissolution of the ancient state is inevitable as it was two years ago, when Lemberg was a recent event? The weaknesses that were to be expected have developed. They have brought defeats and disasters, but Austria has survived. The Slavs who fought badly against the Russians have fought splendidly against the Italians. The entrance of Italy, with her designs upon Dalmatia revealed, enlisted the Southern Slavs; the coming of Rumania, with her aspirations in Transylvania, removed the last question as to Hungarian perseverance to the end. To-day Austria-Hungary does not look permanent in the same sense that Germany seems substantially indivisible, but much light chatter about the passing of the Hapsburgs has become silent, and if there remains a doubt it is whether Austria and Hungary will pass under the domination of Germany or Hungary will assert its control over Austria and Buda replace Vienna as a world capital.

## Turkish Vitality

Nor shall we deny to the Turk a similar vitality. After two years his empire holds despite defeats in Armenia. Constantinople remains impregnable, there is no outward evidence of internal decay and German organization has given new force to Turkish numbers. Turkish troops are fighting in Galicia and in the Dobrudja, and the Oriental Express still performs its appointed journey from Hamburg to Stamboul, from the Elbe to the Golden Horn, the sign and symbol of that Middle Europe which German arms have made a fact.

Looking now on the other side of the picture, we perceive equally plain German miscalculations. Above all, the German conceptions of France and Great Britain must strike even the German as ridiculous to-day. The cardinal doctrine of all German patriotic faith less than two years and a half ago was that France was decadent and that she would fall to the first vigorous blow of virile Germany. Germans of every rank and condition believed it, and German military policy was based upon this belief. France was to be abolished as a military power in six weeks, and now, when nearly five times six months have passed, France remains unbroken and the heaviest German defeats have come

from French armies. The German calculations of peace no longer include the occupation of France from Belfort to Calais.

Not less complete has been the refutation of the German assertions as to Britain. To-day contingents from all British colonies are fighting in Belgium and France; South African troops are extinguishing the last flicker of German light in Africa; Canadians and Australians are in the trenches at the Somme. India is quiet. Egypt has been annexed and has not revolted. Britain has adopted conscription and raised millions. The empire that defended itself by mercenaries and lacked the manhood to endure national service has accepted the Teutonic system and is beginning to get the German results.

## The New Russia

Nor is the awakening as to Russia less complete. After defeats and disasters Russia returned last spring to the attack and in a few short weeks disposed of 800,000 Austrian troops, taking nearly half prisoners. Every intrigue of the court and the nobles for a separate peace has been thwarted, and slowly, painfully, but unmistakably, a new Russia is being developed which is controlled by those who have no sympathy with German ideas or German rulers; a liberal Russia is rising on Germany's eastern marches, a Russia whose very vastness contains a permanent menace to Teutonism.

And so we may say that on both sides of the present firing line there has been an enormous disillusionment, and this disillusionment has been the sole contribution to peace of two years and a half of war. On both sides there are certain things now recognized that would not have been conceded before. Germany recognizes the permanence of France and of Britain, the enduring menace of Russia. The Entente Allies recognize the futility of their earlier notions of remaking Germany to suit their own democratic ideals or selfish aims; they perceive that Austria is not yet necessarily doomed and they behold Turkey still enduring.

## Abandoned Dreams

All these things are a gain for peace. All these things contribute to the removal of ideas and misapprehensions which were, while they continued, a permanent barrier to any possible peace settlement now or hereafter. On the German side they mean a temporary or permanent abandonment of any dream that world

Certain Illusions Have Been Abandoned  
by Germany and the Allies, but the  
Fundamental Battle Between Slav  
and Teuton Remains—War  
of Exhaustion to Decide

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domination can be attained in this war. On the Allied side they dispose of any hope or belief that Germany can be removed as a fact and probably as an enduring danger in the years that are to come; certainly the danger can only be removed by a German decision uninfluenced by external pressure.

What, then, remains before peace can be made? If Germany is prepared to evacuate Belgium and Northern France, conditions that even the German will recognize are necessary antecedents to any settlement, what are the remaining obstacles? The answer is simple. France will under no circumstances make peace now without the retrocession of Alsace-Lorraine. Russia will not make peace without the return of all of her occupied territory, without the restoration of Serbia and without the possession of Constantinople. Italy will not make peace without Trieste, the Trentino and Dalmatia. Rumania has the guarantee of all her allies that she shall have Transylvania and Bukovina, where nearly 2,000,000 Rumanians dwell. As for Britain, we know that it would not be possible for her, even if she desired it, as she does not, to persuade Australia to surrender the German colonies she has taken, South Africa to retire from the German provinces she has conquered, her ally Japan to give up Kiau-chau.

## The Conflicting Claims

There is no great value in analyzing these various claims now; they are of unequal value; they will appeal to Americans differently as American sympathy, knowledge, conviction varies in these several great problems. But the main fact remains that every one of the contestants on the Allies' side to-day prefers to continue the war rather than to surrender the hope which a protraction of the war holds out for them that they may acquire what they believe to be theirs by moral right or necessary to their safety in view of present or future peril coming from Germany.

And on what terms would Germany and her allies make peace? We may fairly dismiss from the reckoning the possibility that Germany will now claim Belgium or any portion of French soil, because such claims would close the question of peace altogether. On the other hand, we may be sure Germany will insist upon the permanence of that Polish state she has created out of Russian Poland, a state to be under Austro-German protection and to serve as a barrier against Russia, a buffer state, not impossible to be increased by the addition of Austrian Poland when Austria has been otherwise remunerated. Conceivably Germany will also insist upon the creation of a state of Lithuania, also under her protection, but this remains doubtful. Probably her present programme for Eastern expansion would be fulfilled by the Polish concession.

As for Austria, she might consent to give the Trentino south of Botzen to Italy,

but she never would resign Trieste or Dalmatia. For herself she would claim the right to decide the fate of Serbia, of Montenegro and of Albania. The Macedonian portion of Serbia would certainly be ceded to Bulgaria; the balance might be joined with Austrian and Hungarian Slav provinces, it might be surrendered to Hungary, it might be erected into a dependent but titularly independent kingdom under an Austrian prince; but as a free state it would vanish.

In addition to Serbian territory, including Monastir and Nish, Bulgaria would receive the Rumanian Dobrudja and Greek Kavala, while Greece would have Southern Albania, now marked for Italy and occupied by Italian troops. As for Turkey, she would keep what she has and accept her losses in Armenia and Egypt.

## Slav Against Teuton

We have here the sum of the differences, then—France, Italy and Rumania claiming their lost provinces (Alsace-Lorraine, Trieste and the Trentino, Transylvania, the permanent barriers to peace, together with the Russian claim to Constantinople. To balance them we have the German claim to Poland, the Austrian claim to Serbia, the determination of the Central Powers to reward their Bulgarian ally, as the other alliance has pledged itself to reward Rumania.

And the real battle is between the Slav and the Teuton. The possession of Alsace-Lorraine by France, of Trieste and the Trentino by Italy will not materially change the European situation. But the possession of Constantinople by the Turk, actually subjected to German direction, or the passing of Constantinople to the Czars will constitute the biggest change in European territory in nearly five centuries, a change, whichever prevails, fraught with peril for all the Mediterranean powers and full of meaning for Britain, now the possessor of Egypt and India.

Those who would understand the present obstacles to peace must recognize that neither alliance would now consent to return to the conditions of 1914; that such a return would, in fact, be a confession of surrender for the Central Powers, because it would mean the restoration of Serbia and the renewal of the Russian threat to Constantinople. They must understand the French feeling toward Alsace-Lorraine, a sentiment compounded of moral conviction and the belief that the war has demonstrated that France is indefensible without the Rhine frontier; the Italian sentiment in the matter of "unredeemed Italy," plus the conviction, strengthened by the war, that Northern Italy is indefensible while Austria holds Trent.

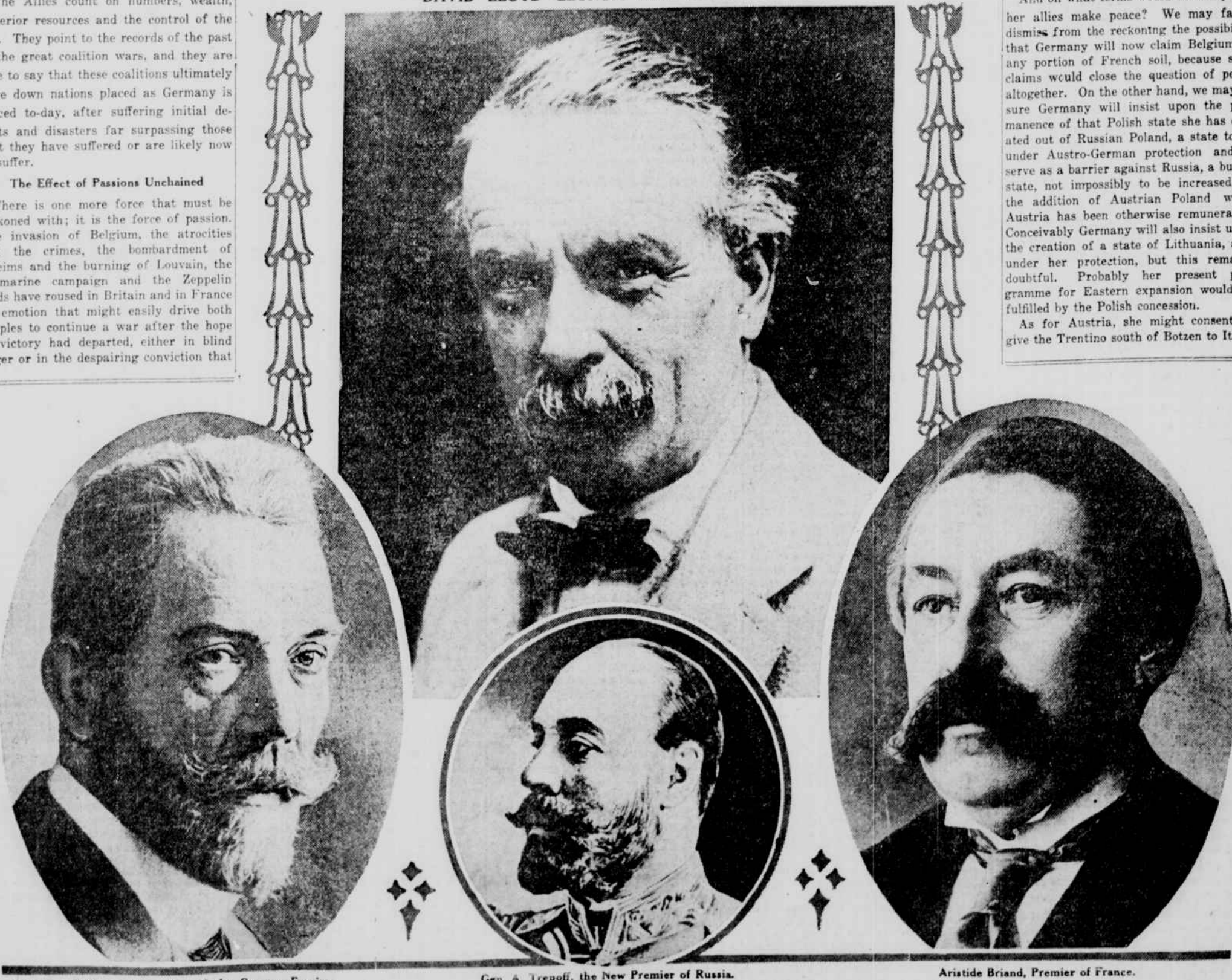
## Exhaustion to Decide

Conversely, they must grasp the German belief that only with a Polish buffer state will Germany be safe against the onrush of the Slav, that only with the door to the Near East open and in Austrian and Turkish hands will Germany be able to reap any harvest from her vast sacrifices or preserve any future commensurate with her rank as a world power and commensurate, too, with the world empires of her opponents, which remain unshaken and, indeed, increased by the present conflict.

Here is the final answer to any present possibility of peace. Such progress as has been made toward peace has been made by the removal of illusions. A limit has been set to the hopes and ambitions of all the combatants, but what still seems to each group possible far exceeds anything the other will concede. Unless there be a sweeping success by one group of powers over the other, which is extremely unlikely, or a change of sides by one power, which grows more and more unlikely, the prospect is for a war of exhaustion, lasting until one group is worn out or both groups, having approached exhaustion with equal step, at last consent to settle around the green table what cannot be settled by battle. This means another Treaty of Westphalia or of Utrecht, just as the defeat of Germany now, and not two years ago, would mean another Congress of Vienna, a congress in which the essential unity of the defeated nations would be recognized as the first condition of permanent peace.

I have to apologize to my readers for a rather humiliating slip last week by which the Hundred Days were described as extending from the landing of Napoleon at St. Helena to the collapse of his empire. The landing, was, of course, not at St. Helena, but from Elba.

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE. NEW BRITISH PREMIER



Bethmann-Hollweg, Chancellor of the German Empire.

Gen. A. Trepoff, the New Premier of Russia.

Aristide Briand, Premier of France.